1926

234 S. Sheppard.
Venice May 17.

My Billy.
I haven't heard from you
yet. but I hope you have
written soon and that I suppose
there can be no excuse in the
way of stable difficulties.
Would you be very cross at
being asked to do two very
tiresome jobs for me? You
will see what they are from
the enclosed letters. The fact
is I did get the two accounts
I meant to pay them before
leaving. but I left them at
Charleston in the hurry of my
departure put away where
no one can find them. & if
they are not paid soon I am
alarmed lest Mrs Benjamin
may find her light & telephone
cut off. I think they came

to about £7 for which I send you a cheque – would you mind paying them if there a little more or less & letting me the difference if I owe you some more – I'm afraid its a great bore as you will have to send these letters to the people whose names & addresses I don't know but the telephone man will be in the directory & the electric light people are the St Pancras Borough Council – Perhaps both are the same as yours. I should be most grateful & can only say I'd do as much for you.

After some days of icy cold & torrents of rain it became lovely – now its inclined to rain again but quite warm – Malcolm Davidson has come from Milan for a few days – He's quite nice

but I think more commonplace than the others. Hughes seems to have left all his personality rather on his nerves - but still we get on all right. Duncan & I paint a good deal & today we went by steamer to Chioggia passing lovely villages & boats with sails painted like moths wings on the way - The odd thing is that so far we have met no friends. in fact hardly any English. a great comfort - I am as usual catching up a little reading on my travels & am becoming rather absorbed in Mrs Sidney Webb! I feel she can only be placed in Venice. One finds what Jenn her in bathing up at a fishing boat would be too depressing in England. However I hope never to meet her in real life My encounter in a dream was quite enough for me.

You have had many more excitements than we have I daresay. Clive sent me an account of the battle & seemed to think he might become a policeman. Which however like no doubt - was a castle in the air. He also said Mary, to add to her troubles, had sacked the last consolation. Has she other troubles? Do send me all the gossip you can collect. What about the Keynes'? Do you ever see them.

I have not yet talked to Apples. I thought I'd better wait as long as possible." That he should be feeling jealous & vicarious. But you think I'd better not talk may to him. in which case let me know. He is a curious languid creature I see how different in temperament or something he is from any of us. But - I should say he had some invaluable qualities if they can be brought into play. I think we shall stay on here for the present

Yours ever

May 15 (1926)

Your letter has just come - & is most welcome, as the rain is pouring down from a perfectly grey sky. Duncan is in bed with a sore throat. & everyone is feeling rather disheartened. I am thankful I have escaped the state of things you describe as I would infinitely rather read your account - if it has to be in it. It must have been very hectic & evidently you were at the hub. I suppose even I could have escaped a good deal of very tiresome discussion. (Though perhaps my cold water would have blessed unavailingly M Rosa's fantastic proceedings. What a world! Was England really at the mercy of interviews with leaders Desmond & Winston etc? But I'm afraid the reality compared &

your letter may have been much like Miss Bates in the flesh compared to Jane's account. No. 1 would rather have you or Jane decidedly & next time there is a political or other upheaval in England I shall certainly fly to Venice.

So please write again.

It is really appalling here when it rains. I must plunge into Beatrice – but the weeds to read in sunshine. I think Duncan will recover soon. But he's got one of his usual bad sore throats which must run its course.

Has Clive gone to Paris yet?

Yours V.W.

T. PARSONS 3-2-72

(141)

234 S. Gregorio
Venice. May 27

(1926)

My Billy.
You will have seen Angus I suppose before you get this & heard all his latest news, such as it is, from him. I hope he will have started life again in a fairly decent spirit. I had a certain amount of talk with him but whether it will have done any good I don't know. He didn't seem to me to need much enlightenment from me. He was evidently quite aware of his own drawbacks. such as want of initiative & was only too ready to admit faults on his side. In the end I thought it was simply a question whether you can use his good qualities to advantage as the main difficulties I am sure are temperamental & I suspect

cannot be changed - The press
of course visit to him what it
is to you or Leonard, but even
if it were I don't believe it
would make very much difference
He would always be slow & cautious
& find it almost impossible to
make decisions. Just as he did here
about quite unimportant things, such
as whether we should go to Ravenna
for a few days or not - but if you
accept that as an inevitable part
of his nature it seems to me
possible you might find his good
qualities of extreme conscientiousness
& reliability well worth while. as
I suspect they may be rarer than
one thinks & might not to form
a bad combination with the Woolf
element of enterprise & experiment.
I shall be anxious to hear what
happens. Perhaps I ought to have
said more. but it was difficult when

all we could do was to point out things be admitted at once - I cannot help thinking it would be great fun to have the conversation suggested between you two, Angus, Mr C. Duncan & myself - Could it be arranged.

I hope you've pulled your plays successfully at Rodwell - Has life returned to normal at all? I hear coal is rationed & they're short - at Charleston. Not perhaps its all right in London with gas. or is that rationed too? Are your books recovering? I was terrified by your description of Newington High St. but I've no doubt you loved it. Let us go on a pilgrimage one day to 22. H.P.S. & see over it - I think we might to see what condition it's in or it may all tumble down at the end of the lease. I hope you'll send us some criticisms of our show too.

Its evidently a great success as regards Duncan & also Porter. Duncan has sold most of his by now I expect & Porter several. I feel rather a failure as I think I've only sold 2 small still lives, one to Lydia.

My financial position will be very rocky when I return I fear. especially if the rates have gone up as alarmingly as you say. I sometimes think we could do worse than economise here. It is elsewhere in a warm climate. when it is warm, as now. One can live very cheaply & simply, much more so than seems possible in London & of course we could do so much more if we weren't a tourist. But then you'd miss me I hope as nothing will drag you from your beloved London mists. Duncan & I seem to have settled down here now. but we make no plans & depend largely on weather Also neither of us have a watch that will go. so our lives altogether go by the sun. which thank goodness is shining. I think it must be about time I stopped - My love to your husband. Please write for your letters are essential to life. Your VW

234 S. Gregorio.
Venice. June 8

(1926)

My Billy.
I will not say (which would annoy you or would it flatter you?) that I prefer your letters to yourself. No. I don't. But you really ought to be touched if you could see how your faithful dog & cat devours them & lick up every scrap & limp for more. Indeed as you probably have a pen in your hand every day I can't see why it should offend itself to me. As for your scrap it almost too good to be true. Billy! Our old friend Billy! If we had just a little more chance of you we should send her a telegram of congratulations but Duncan thinks it might be cruel to do so. How can anyone on earth conceive of living with her. But then I suppose she has

a handsome dowry. As for Julian Morrell it is not so surprising but very interesting. I hope by the time I return you will have been to Sarsina & be able to tell us exactly how much sympathy you have to offer & how much to Julian. But Olly's return to Bloomsbury is really rather appalling. To think she & Roger might have found themselves next-door to each other. I expect I shall have to quarrel with her as the only way out as I simply can't stand the thought of the parties she'll give now of her coming to call on me.

Well, you'll be glad to hear that you will soon see me again. Our funds are giving out & we calculate that in a few days we must leave Italy

& make for Paris. There we may stay a few days - I at any rate shant stay very long. I shall probably go straight back by Dieppe & Charleston for a day or two. so that I suppose I shall be in London again towards the end of next week. But I'll let you know perhaps from Paris. where at the Hotel de Londres I may find Clive - he never writes so I dont know - & possibly may not but I hope to turn this head & return to Albert Road - & possibly a letter from you -

if you are in a good temper. When & where did I ever say that your temper was bad? My conscience is clear. at least I think it is. but of course one may say anything at certain moments & I daresay

if that was the only way in which I could down you in the eyes of one of your admirers I may have said it. But I can't remember it.

Why don't you write art criticisms for the Nation instead of setting in unbalanced thus & amiable Jannies like Mr Ede? I won't say you are an infallible critic, though Duncan can tell you that as we pace the length of the Sinderella I remind again & again on your words. I wonder if I should recast all my intentions regarding my art in consequence of them — but at least you would be readable. I am glad that you approve of some of my works — There seems to be universal agreement that Duncan's Twickenham is a work of genius, though his circus apparently was the first favourite Roger might to be pleased. Vanessa

& Duncan he had sold most-
ly. I sold 6. Parker 5. Helen
I think 3 & Keith only 2 -
at least that was the last
report.

Quite quite wrong of course
not to tell me more about
Monks House which fascinates
me - I rather think you
have & turn me into a
drawing room at a point
& a sewing machine
& let me do my worst. I
should think nothing of it
after my energies at Charleston
which you have, till & see.
I hear from Grace that we
have lots of roses & that
altogether the garden is a
picture. What about yours?
But of course I can't really
compete with Leonard I know.
Still I like & pretend I care.
Hear nothing of my children

except Phyllis. I dreamt that Quentin is nearly killed in a bicycle accident but I hear no news, except the letter posted a fortnight after it was written. I shall have to pay them a visit.

Mr Squire of course is an old friend of ours & at one time his paintings met with a good deal of admiration - but Duncan thinks he has got into low (artistically speaking) company. He was never very high. & as for Duncan's past chatterings, he can remember nothing before the year 1909 & his parties every night & every morning describe them to me - Everyone would then be happy - except perhaps Lemard.

Yours VW

(142)

Hôtel de Londres
3 Rue Bonaparte - Paris. June 6 (1926?)

My Billy.

Its very wicked of you to have got influenza & headache - & I hope you feel thoroughly ashamed of yourself - Do be careful. as you would at every return & private life for the rest of the summer, however much pleasure it might give me & have you safely tored up. Here I am. quite near home again - We arrived yesterday, rather unwilling to be on this chilly side of the Alps again. especially as its very cold & pouring in Paris (today's a little better however.) I am really only to say that I think I shall return to Charleston on Saturday. Shall you still be at Rodmell? I hope so. Will you send me a line to Charleston, marked, not to be forwarded. & say what - quite long & whether we could meet. I may stay / have a few days, in which case perhaps / could come over & see you, possibly on the Monday, if you're still there. Anyhow let me know.

Clive is here but not many

& he leaves tomorrow.

Tell Leonard, with my best love, I not in sorrow or anger, that Ede is not my hatching. No doubt he's confusing me with Bailey or Ede with some unknown genius - but never never can I have mentioned Ede for I didn't even know the man wrote & hardly know him.

Do you want anything from Paris? Life is absurdly cheap here. & dresses & all cost very very little. By the way, don't accuse me of flattering Fanny Hatton either - I was extremely careful not to. No. neither she, Ede, nor Angus, are my hatching. I know better. But if you'd like a Fragonard from Paris tell me, for I am quite willing & produce that. Only you'll hardly have time to.

I'm glad to think you have warm June nights at Rodmell. But I suspect your emotions act as a hot bottle. Give my humble respects to Vita, who treats me as an Arab steed working from the corner of its eye or some long eared mule. But tell me if your test to stir up jealousy between us, it was not successful. Your V.W.

What can one expect of Vita seems to me really almost as inscrutable as Ede!

Charleston
Fork

1926.

Dec 27

My Billy.

Yours packages reached me J
one quite. only instead J Christ
Miss imitation Anglo. Indian bazaar
horrors not one lovely pearl necklace
& silk stockings & a sewing machine
which really sews. You are much
too reckless of course. but you give
great pleasure & this household.
I wonder if Vic has basking in
Cornish sunshine. Ike it has been
fine but biting cold. The fairies so
not & we run out of candles &
worst of all the turkey never came
from Mr Germany. all the Keyes'
turkey sent at the same time did
come. So perhaps Vic think yours
Christmas with Ka better than it would
have been here. But are you coming
for the New Year & see your nephews?
I must warn you that an almost

too painful reprisal has been prepared for
you. I really don't know how either
you or Leonard will take it. I will
only say that its most painful
points were sharpened innocently.
But it will be a great cause for
rejoicing to your nephews - & niece -
if you do come - Perhaps you
won't be able to face going away again
after Cornwall. Only a week end to
Sussex is nothing. Please let me
know if you can bear it & if so
when you will come - I believe
Roger is coming some time - I don't
know exactly when. but you can
find out from him & come at the
same time or not as you like.
There's plenty of room for you all -
Clive won't be back as he leaves on
Wednesday for his New Years party
& probably Duncan will have gone too
so I can only hold out myself & my
children as inducements.
My love to your husband & yourself

T. PARSONS 3.2.23